

AFGHANISTAN ---AN IMMEDIATE DETAIL OPPORTUNITY

Continuous Open Recruitment

Next assignments scheduled for January 15-July 15, 2005

Candidate interviews are scheduled for week

December 6-10, 2004

IMMEDIATE DETAIL OPPORTUNITY — SIXTH MONTH TEMPORARY DUTY (TDY) POSITIONS IN AFGHANISTAN ON PROVINCIAL RECONSTRUCTION TEAM (PRT):

USDA/FAS/ICD announces a detail opportunity for Agricultural Technical Advisors in Afghanistan. This assignment is for 6 months and assignments **will start as early as January 2005**. The Scope of Work is below. These positions may be filled at the GS 12 level **or above**. The candidates selected will remain at their current grade and step and be eligible for danger pay and hardship allowances.

Interested individuals should submit a resume, as well as a separate statement to address the Knowledge, Skills and Abilities (KSAs) listed below **ASAP** to Veronica Priddy, Development Resources Division, International Cooperation and Development, Foreign Agricultural Service, Room 3208, Ag. Stop 1087; phone 202 690-1831 FAX 202 690-1960 or email: veronica.priddy@usda.gov. Questions about the position should be directed to Otto Gonzalez 202 690-2919 or otto.gonzalez@usda.gov; or Sarah Librea 202 690-1830; or Veronica Priddy 202-690-1831.

Upon review of resumes and KSAs, the selected candidates will have an interview in Washington, DC with the FAS/ICD Afghanistan Team. Travel to and from DC will be paid for and arranged through FAS/ICD. The next scheduled interviews with candidates will take place the week of **December 6-10, 2004**.

Afghanistan - Agricultural Technical Advisor

(6-month detail at current grade)

Background

After 23 years of conflict and lack of international engagement, Afghanistan cannot rebuild its agricultural markets without rebuilding its agricultural infrastructure, both physical and institutional.

At least 80% of Afghanistan's people are farmers or herders or both. Trading partners and competitors have progressed while Afghanistan has not. To effectively re-enter regional and international trade, Afghanistan must somehow reconstruct its devastated agricultural sector as it is confronted with uncertain internal security situation.

In Afghanistan the U.S. Government is trying a new way to foster security, stability and development under situations of post-conflict or unfinished conflict. Created by the U.S. Department of Defense, Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) are composed usually of about 60

or more military personnel (both force protection and civil affairs personnel), and a few civilian advisors. The Department of Defense requested the U.S. Department of Agriculture to place advisors on PRTs, who along with civilians from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and the U.S. Department of State comprise the civilian component of various PRTs. The PRT is to help establish security, enabling the Afghan national and local governments, as well as various humanitarian aid organizations to accomplish their reconstruction goals for Afghanistan.

The USDA personnel on PRTs serve as Agricultural Advisors working actively with the PRT commander, aid organizations, and the national and local governments to get meaningful reconstruction projects underway.

The Afghan people have huge challenges to overcome to rebuild their physical infrastructure for agricultural production, train farmers in improved methods, rehabilitate the country's degraded natural resources, and effectively participate in international agricultural markets. Rebuilding of Afghanistan's economy, political stability, and overall security cannot be achieved without reconstruction of the agricultural sector. The USDA advisors are playing a valuable role in fostering the reconstruction of Afghanistan through their on-the-ground technical assistance efforts.

From October 2003 to present, USDA FAS/ICD has selected and deployed 11 agricultural advisors on PRTs, and one USDA PRT Officer, located in Kabul, to serve in 6-month assignments on PRTs in Afghanistan.

Scope of Work

The United States Department of Agriculture will detail staff for six-month assignments as Agricultural Advisors on U.S. Military Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRT) in Afghanistan.

The job of the **USDA Agricultural Advisor on a PRT** is to help enable, support, and foster reconstruction of the agricultural sector, and to help build the ability of the Afghan central government to support and provide services to agricultural sector. Some broad areas of need in the agricultural sector being addressed by USDA's Agricultural Advisors on PRTs include: employment and income generation; food security and nutrition; export agriculture – traditional export crops, horticultural crops, improved processing and distribution, value-added processing; rehabilitation and rebuilding of agricultural infrastructure – both physical and institutional; rehabilitation of degraded lands; control of livestock disease and improvement of livestock health, and alternatives to poppy cultivation.

To address these broad areas of need, specific technical needs have been identified for the PRTs to provide assistance:

- Soil erosion – heavy and widespread
- Irrigation – systems in disrepair, non-functional or absent; low or no knowledge of improved, more water-efficient methods
- Seed collecting, handling and storage- poor practices leading to poor germination rates and waste of resources

- Nursery/orchard – poor growing practices for trees and horticultural crops; poor species and variety selection
- Sorting and grading of dried fruits and other horticultural products for sale; poor or no practices resulting in low market prices and low returns for farmer
- Horticultural products – poor processing, packaging, shipping, and marketing; lack of market understanding and information
- Post harvest losses in various crops – poor storage practices
- Agricultural inputs – lack of knowledge of proper application practices
- Water use – low efficiency; low water availability, poor collection/storage
- Livestock health – poor due to lack of disease control, poor nutrition, or both
- Degraded watersheds– streambanks in need of stabilization; hillsides in need of revegetation/reforestation
- Food security and human nutrition – poor due to low crop yields, lack of certain nutrients in diet or other reasons

USDA staff will live in a military compound and conduct their activities under rigorous security guidelines established by the PRT commander. USDA staff will be expected to participate in general housekeeping and cooking duties along with other members of the PRT. **Security considerations in the PRT always take precedence over program needs.** The USDA Agricultural Advisor assigned to the PRT comes under the authority of the of the PRT commander and ultimately under the authority of the Chief-of-Mission in Kabul. All travel outside the PRT must have approval of the PRT commander and will be military transport on an as-needed basis.

USDA staff assigned to a PRT will be traveling, living and working in a physically challenging environment, without normal home or office amenities, physical comforts or off-work entertainment and distractions. Communication with family and friends in the U.S. may be difficult at times, however a laptop computer with access to email, and a satellite phone are made available for your use. USDA staff will be expected to adjust to life in the PRT and adapt quickly to living and working in the Afghan culture. If you cannot make a commitment to living and working for six months under these conditions you should not apply for this position.

The fundamental objective of the Agricultural Technical Advisor is ***to do whatever possible to increase agricultural growth and rural incomes in the province to which he or she is assigned.*** As the Agricultural Advisor you will be expected to do the following:

- Adapt quickly to a physically and psychologically challenging assignment in a traditional Muslim culture, and adjust to the responsibilities and requirements of being embedded for six months in a spartan US military installation in a potentially hostile environment.
- Serve as the agricultural advisor on the Provincial Reconstruction Team and mobilize available human resources within the team it design and implement agricultural development and soil and water conservation projects throughout the province.

- Assess the needs of rural farmers and provide authoritative technical, organizational and operational guidance to help them increase the production and marketing of agricultural products and generate increased family income. This will involve linking farmers and farm communities with available sources of credit, production inputs and marketing opportunities.
- Facilitate local community access to fund donors to obtain funds for local development projects and establish practical systems to assure communities use the funds in an appropriate manner. This may involve working directly with local officials and community leaders to prepare project proposals, establish budgets, identify appropriate funding sources, and conduct simple spot audits.
- Assist local representatives of Afghan government ministries (Agriculture; Irrigation, Water and Environment; and Rural Reconstruction) to design and implement programs to promote agricultural growth and increase the income of the rural population. Efforts should be made to enhance the role and effectiveness of the national government in the rural areas of the country.
- Support national, provincial and local projects that encourage environmental protection and natural resource management, with special attention to reconstruction of irrigation systems, and improved management of scarce watershed and water resources. As appropriate, serve as a link to the Afghan Conservation Corps and facilitate communication between corps offices in Kabul and communities in the province.

Qualified applicants should have: (Knowledge, Skills and Abilities)

1. A knowledge base that is anchored in an advanced degree in an agricultural science, or developed from experience working in any of several agricultural subject areas. This could include agricultural production, marketing and business management, agricultural engineering, credit, irrigation and water management, soil conservation, etc. A broad knowledge of horticultural crops, agronomic crops and livestock is desirable.
2. International experience working on agricultural development projects with exposure to a number of development situations in a range of geographic and cultural environments. Particularly useful is a demonstrated ability to successfully adapt and work effectively in a cross-cultural situation.
3. An understanding of, and ability to implement, commonly accepted principles and theories underlying agriculture extension, agriculture technology transfer and community development. The applicant should also possess analytical tools and skills appropriate for putting theory into practice.
4. A record of being establishing effective, team-based working relationships, from field staff

to policy making levels, with a wide range of individuals and organizations, including technical experts and contractors, host-country partners (both public and private sectors), and international organizations. Demonstrated ability to work with local leaders, national government officials, USG officials, donors and other members of the development and military community.

5. Proven ability to work successfully at multiple levels of problem solving, including a capacity to be resourceful and adaptable, to be able to get along with a wide variety of people under stressful conditions, and to respond effectively to virtually any situation that might arise.

Supervisory Control

The incumbent is expected to exercise considerable initiative, professional judgment, and authoritative technical expertise in the overall management of agricultural activities while a member of the Provincial Reconstruction Team. He or she will have the authority, within security parameters established by the PRT commander, to design, schedule, implement and evaluate activities.

Management oversight of USDA's Afghan Initiative will reside in Washington in the International Cooperation and Development program area of the Foreign Agricultural Service.

Agency Commitment

It has been determined by the department that the home agency from which a candidate is selected must continue to pay base salary, benefits and pay differentials (50% of base salary) for the 6 months the selected individual is in Afghanistan. In addition, the agency must agree to return the individual to the position they vacated prior to leaving for Afghanistan.